



Grant Park Music Festival

Seventy-sixth Season

Grant Park Orchestra and Chorus

Carlos Kalmar, *Principal Conductor*

Christopher Bell, *Chorus Director*

First Program: Vivaldi: Four Seasons

Wednesday, June 16, 2010 at 6:30 p.m.

Jay Pritzker Pavilion

GRANT PARK ORCHESTRA

Carlos Kalmar, *Conductor*

Elina Vähälä, *Violin*

BERLIOZ Overture, *The Roman Carnival*, Op. 9

VIVALDI *The Four Seasons* for Violin and Orchestra,
Op. 8, Nos. 1-4

SPRING: Allegro — Largo e pianissimo sempre —
Danza Pastorale (Allegro)

SUMMER: Allegro non molto — Adagio — Presto

AUTUMN: Allegro — Adagio Molto — Allegro

WINTER: Allegro non molto — Largo — Allegro

ELINA VÄHÄLÄ

RESPIGHI *Feste Romane*

Circus Maximus

The Jubilee

The October Festival

Epiphany

Played without pause

This concert is sponsored by ComEd.

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CARLOS KALMAR's biography can be found on Page 10.



ELINA VÄHÄLÄ born in the United States and raised in Finland, is one of today's most sought-after musicians. In 1999, she won the Young Concert Artists International Auditions in New York and the following year won prizes in the Lipinsky-Wieniawski Competition in Lublin, Poland and the Joseph Joachim Violin Competition in Hanover, Germany. Some highlights of Ms. Vähälä's current season include appearances with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra (conducted by Tugan Sokhiev) and Hamburger Camerata (Ralf Gothóni), a return to the Oregon Symphony (Carlos Kalmar), and performances at the

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. Ms. Vähälä has also performed with the Minnesota Orchestra, Colorado Symphony, Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra and MIAGI Festival in South Africa, and toured in Asia. Elina Vähälä has formed a special partnership with the legendary English Chamber Orchestra, with which she has performed in the United Kingdom, Finland, France, South Africa, Poland, Turkey, Greece, the Caribbean and Spain, where she shared the stage with Maxim Vengerov. In December 2008, Ms. Vähälä performed at the Nobel Peace Prize Ceremony, a concert that was televised to 300 million households in 100 countries. Ms. Vähälä's repertoire ranges from baroque to contemporary. She has given world premieres of Aulis Sallinen's Chamber Concerto and C. Curtis-Smith's Double Concerto, both written for her and pianist-conductor Ralf Gothóni. Ms. Vähälä also gave the Scandinavian premiere of John Corigliano's "The Red Violin" Concerto. Elina Vähälä plays an Antonio Stradivari violin made in 1678 and generously loaned by the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

**2010
2011
SEASON**



Don Quixote

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OVERTURE, THE ROMAN CARNIVAL, OP. 9 (1843)**Hector Berlioz (1803-1869)**

The Roman Carnival Overture is scored for piccolo, flute, oboe, English horn, two clarinets, four bassoons, four horns, two cornets, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, percussion and strings. The performance time is approximately eight minutes. This work was first performed by the Grant Park Orchestra on July 7, 1935, conducted by Col. Armin F. Hand.



Around 1830, when Beethoven's orchestral works were first being heard in Paris, Berlioz wrote a critical appreciation titled *Beethoven's Nine Symphonies and Fidelio* — his only opera, and its overtures. Beethoven, of course, composed four separate overtures for *Fidelio*, three of which are known under the title of *Leonore*. Perhaps with Beethoven's example in mind, Berlioz in 1843 returned to his 1838 opera, *Benvenuto Cellini*, and wrote for it a second overture.

The failure of *Benvenuto Cellini* at its premiere was nearly complete. Except for the original overture to the opera, everything else, Berlioz reported, “was hissed with admirable energy and unanimity.” Five years later he mined the opera for thematic material for a new overture that he could use either as an independent concert work or as the introduction to the second act of *Benvenuto*. With the flavor of the opera's setting and his own Italian travels as guides, he named it *Roman Carnival*. The Overture had a resounding success at its concert premiere in Paris on February 3, 1844.

The *Roman Carnival Overture* borrows two melodies from *Benvenuto Cellini*. The slow theme, presented by the solo English horn, is based on Benvenuto's aria *O Teresa, vous que j'aime* (“O Teresa, whom I adore”). This melody was originally composed for the cantata *La Mort [Death] de Cléopâtre*, Berlioz's unsuccessful attempt to win the Prix de Rome in 1829. About the Overture's other theme, a bubbling *saltarello* reminiscent of the folk dances he had heard in Rome, the composer had a tale to tell in his *Memoirs*: “Habeneck [conductor of the opera's premiere] could not catch the lively pace of the *saltarello* that is danced and sung in the Piazza Colonna in the second act. The dancers, put out by his sluggish tempo, complained to me. I kept urging him on, ‘Faster, faster! Put more life into it!’ Habeneck struck the desk in his annoyance and broke his baton. In the end, after witnessing four or five similar outbursts, I remarked with a coolness that infuriated him, ‘My dear sir, breaking fifty batons won't prevent your tempo from being twice as slow as it ought to be. This is a *saltarello*.’ At which Habeneck stopped and, turning round to the orchestra, said, ‘Since I am unfortunately unable to satisfy M. Berlioz, we will leave it at that for today. You may go, gentlemen.’ And there the rehearsal ended.

“A few years later, when I wrote the *Roman Carnival Overture* — the main theme of the *Allegro* of which is this same *saltarello* that he could never get right — Habeneck was in the artists' room at the Salle Herz on the evening of the first performance. He had heard that at the morning rehearsal we had played it through without the wind instruments (the National Guard having relieved me of part of my orchestra), and he had come to witness the catastrophe. One sees his point. Indeed, when I arrived in the orchestra, all the wind players crowded round me, appalled at the thought of giving a public performance of an overture that was completely unknown to them. ‘Don't worry,’ I said. ‘The parts are correct and you are all excellent players. Watch my stick as often as you can, count your rests carefully, and everything will be all right. Not a single mistake occurred. On my return to the artists' room, I saw Habeneck standing with a slightly crestfallen air, and said casually as I went past, ‘That's how it goes.’ He did not reply.”

The Overture is in two large sections, preceded by an introductory flourish based on the *saltarello* melody. The theme of the work's first section is presented by the English horn. As it proceeds and is repeated, this lovely strain is wrapped in Berlioz's characteristic, glowing orchestral fabric. (Note, for example, the shimmering gloss applied to the sound by the tambourine and triangle.) Following this love song, the strains of the *saltarello* launch the Overture into a rousing carnival dance. Amid the swirling gaiety of this street festival, the simple strain of the love song from the first section is heard in the rich sonorities of bassoons and trombones. The exuberance of the *saltarello* soon resumes to close this musical Mardi Gras with some dazzling rhythmic and harmonic surprises.

**THE FOUR SEASONS FOR VIOLIN AND ORCHESTRA, OP. 8,
NOS. 1-4 (CA. 1720)****Antonio Vivaldi (1678-1741)**

The *Four Seasons* is scored for strings and continuo. The performance time is approximately forty minutes. The *Four Seasons* was first performed by the Grant Park Orchestra on July 12, 1974, David Zinman conducting.



The *Gazette d'Amsterdam* of December 14, 1725 announced the issuance by the local publisher Michele Carlo Le Cène of a collection of twelve concertos for solo violin and orchestra by Antonio Vivaldi — *Il Cimento dell'Armonia e dell'Inventione*, or “*The Contest between Harmony and Invention*,” Op. 8. The works were printed with a flowery dedication typical of the time to the Bohemian Count Wenzel von Morzin, a distant cousin of Haydn’s patron before he came into the employ of the Esterházy family in 1761. On the title page, Vivaldi described himself as the “*maestro* in Italy” to the Count, though there is no record of his having held a formal position with him. Vivaldi probably met Morzin when he worked in Mantua from 1718 to 1720 for the Habsburg governor of that city, Prince Philipp of Hessen-Darmstadt, and apparently provided the Bohemian Count with an occasional composition on demand. (A bassoon concerto, RV 496, is headed with Morzin’s name.)

Vivaldi claimed that Morzin had been enjoying the concertos of the 1725 Op. 8 set “for some years,” implying earlier composition dates and a certain circulation of this music in manuscript copies, and hoped that their appearance in print would please his patron. The first four concertos, those depicting the seasons of the year, seem to have especially excited Morzin’s admiration, so Vivaldi made specific the programmatic implications of the works by heading each of them with an anonymous sonnet, perhaps of his own devising, and then repeating the appropriate verses above the exact measures in the score that they had inspired. *The Four Seasons* pleased not only Count Morzin, but quickly became one of Vivaldi’s most popular works. A pirated edition appeared in Paris within weeks of the Amsterdam publication, and by 1728, the concertos had become regular items on the programs of the Concert Spirituel in Paris. The *Spring Concerto* was adapted in 1755 as an unaccompanied flute solo by Jean Jacques Rousseau, the philosopher and dilettante composer who was attracted by the work’s musical portrayal of Nature, and as a motet (!) by Michel Corrette to the text “*Laudate Dominum de coelis*” in 1765. Today, *The Four Seasons* remains Vivaldi’s best-known work, and one of the most beloved compositions in the orchestral repertory.

Of Vivaldi’s more than 400 concertos, only 28 have titles, many of them referring to the performer who first played the work or to the occasion for which it was written. Of the few composition titles with true programmatic significance, seven are found in the Op. 8 collection: *The Four Seasons* plus *La Tempesta di Mare* (“*The Storm at Sea*”), *La Caccia* (“*The Hunt*”) and *Il Piacere* (“*Pleasure*”). Concerning the title of the Op. 8 set — “*The Contest between Harmony and Invention*” — Amelia Haygood wrote, “‘Harmony’ represents the formal structure of the compositions; ‘invention’ the unhampered flow of the composer’s creative imagination; and the ‘contest’ implies a dynamic balance between the two, which allows neither ‘harmony’ nor ‘invention’ to gain the upper hand. The perfect balance which results offers a richness in both areas: the outpouring of melody, the variety of instrumental color, the vivid musical imagery are all to be found within a formal framework which is elegant and solid.”

Though specifically programmatic (Lawrence Gilman went so far as to call *The Four Seasons* “symphonic poems” and harbingers of Romanticism), the fast, outer movements of these works use the *ritornello* form usually found in Baroque concertos. The opening *ritornello* theme (Italian for “return”), depicting the general emotional mood of each fast movement, recurs to separate its various descriptive episodes, so that the music fulfills both the demands of creating a logical, abstract form and evoking vivid images from Nature. The slow, middle movements are lyrical, almost aria-like, in style. Though Vivaldi frequently utilized in these pieces the standard *concertino*, or solo group, of two violins and cello found in the 18th-century concerto grosso, *The Four Seasons* is truly a work for solo violin and orchestra, and much of the music’s charm comes from the contrasting and interweaving of the soloist and accompanying orchestra. Of these evergreen concertos, Marc

Pincherle, in his classic biography of Vivaldi, wrote, “Their breadth, their clearness of conception, the obvious pleasure with which the composer wrought them, the favorable reception which has been theirs from the first, their reverberations since then — all these unite to make them one of the masterpieces of the descriptive repertory.”

For the publication of *The Four Seasons* in 1725, Vivaldi prefaced each of the concertos with an explanatory sonnet. These poems are given below with a note describing the music relating to the particular verses:

Spring, Op. 8, No. 1 (RV 269)

The spring has come, joyfully

(the vivacious opening section for full orchestra — the “ritornello” — that returns between episodes and at the end of the movement)

The birds welcome it with merry song

(trills and shakes, violins)

And the streams, in the gentle breezes, flow forth with sweet murmurs.

(undulating violin phrases)

Now the sky is draped in black,

Thunder and lightning announce a storm.

(tremolos and fast scales)

When the storm has passed, the little birds

Return to their harmonious songs.

(gently rising phrases and long trills in the violins)

And in the lovely meadow full of flowers,

To the gentle rustling of leaves and branches,

The goatherd sleeps, his faithful dog at his side. *(Movement II)*

To the rustic bagpipe’s merry sound,

Nymphs and shepherds dance under the lovely sky

When spring appears in all its brilliance. *(Movement III)*

Summer, Op. 8, No. 2 (RV 315)

In the heat of the blazing summer sun,

Man and beast languish; the pine tree is scorched.

(the enervated “ritornello”)

The cuckoo raises his voice

(wide, fast leaps in the solo violin)

Soon the turtledove and goldfinch join in the song.

(A solo violin episode with leaps and trills)

A gentle breeze blows

(quick triplets, violins)

But then the north wind battles with its neighbor

(rushing scales, full orchestra)

And the shepherd weeps

(expressive, chromatic theme for solo violin and continuo)

As above him the dreaded storm gathers, controlling his fate.

(forceful scales and figurations in the full orchestra)

His weary limbs are roused from rest

By his fear of the lightning and fierce thunder

And by the angry swarms of flies and hornets.

(Movement II, alternating bittersweet complaints from the solo violin with quick, repeated note interjections by the full orchestra)

Alas, his fears are borne out
Thunder and lightning dominate the sky
Bending down the tops of trees and flattening the grain.
(the tempestuous third movement)

Autumn, Op. 8, No. 3 (RV 293)

The peasant celebrates with dance and song
The joy of a fine harvest
(the merry opening "ritornello")
And filled with Bacchus' liquor
(inebriated arpeggios, scales, trills and figurations from the solo violin alternating with the "ritornello" theme)
He ends his fun in sleep.
(progressively slower notes in the solo violin until the music stops completely before ending with the "ritornello" theme)

Everyone is made to leave dancing and singing
The air is gentle and pleasing
And the season invites everyone
To enjoy a delightful sleep. *(Movement II)*

At dawn the hunters set out
With horns, guns and dogs.
(the bounding main theme)
The hunted animal flees, the hunters follow its tracks
(arpeggiated triplets in the solo violin)
Terrified and exhausted by the great noise
Of guns and dogs.
(violent, shaking figures in the orchestra)
Wounded, it tries feebly to escape,
But is caught and dies.
(flashing scales by the soloist cut short by the violent interjections of the orchestra)

Winter, Op. 8, No. 4 (RV 297)

Freezing and shivering in the icy darkness
(the chordal, almost motionless main theme)
In the severe gusts of a terrible wind
(rushing scales and chords in the solo violin)
Running and stamping one's feet constantly
(a brief, repeated note motive alternating with a leaping figure)
So chilled that one's teeth chatter.
(tremolo)

Spending quiet and happy days by the fire
While outside the rain pours everywhere. *(Movement II)*

Walking on the ice with slow steps
(the plaintive main theme, solo violin)
Walking carefully for fear of falling
(slow, steady chords in the orchestra)
Then stepping out boldly, and falling down.
(quick scales and then several brief descending flourishes)
Going out once again onto the ice, and running boldly

(*steady motion up and down the scale in the solo violin*)
 Until the ice cracks and breaks,
 (*snapping, separated figures*)
 Hearing, as they burst forth from their iron gates, the Scirocco,
 (*a smooth melody in close-interval harmony*)
 The North Wind, and all the winds battling.
 This is winter, but such joy it brings.
 (*rushing figurations close the work*)

FESTE ROMANE (“ROMAN FESTIVALS”) (1928)

Ottorino Respighi (1879-1936)

Feste Romane is scored for piccolo, three flutes, two oboes, English horn, two B-flat, E-flat and bass clarinets, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, four trumpets, three trombones, tuba, three herald trumpets, timpani, percussion, piano, four-hands organ, mandolin and strings. The performance time is approximately 24 minutes. Feste Romane was first performed by the Grant Park Orchestra on June 22, 1997, Alessandro Siciliani conducting.



Ottorino Respighi, born on July 9, 1879 into the family of a piano teacher in Bologna, was introduced to music by his father and progressed so rapidly that he began his professional training in violin, piano and composition at age thirteen at the city’s respected Liceo Musicale; his principal teacher was the school’s director, Giuseppe Martucci, then Italy’s leading composer of orchestral music. Respighi was granted a leave from the Liceo in 1900 to play as a violist with the orchestra of the St. Petersburg Opera, and he took advantage of his time in Russia to arrange what he called “a few, but for me very important” lessons with Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, whose brilliant orchestral technique would prove to be a lasting influence. Respighi returned to Bologna the following year to complete his degree and then went to Berlin to study violin and composition with Max Bruch. After spending another season in St. Petersburg, he settled in Bologna in 1903, earning his living as a free-lance violinist and receiving his earliest notice as a composer — some of his violin and piano pieces were published in 1904; his first opera, *Re Enzo* (“*King Enzo*”), was given a student production at the Liceo in 1905; Rodolfo Ferrari conducted the *Notturmo* on an orchestral concert at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York in 1908 — and becoming active as an editor and arranger of music from the 17th and 18th centuries.

Respighi was back in Berlin in 1908, teaching piano at a private school there, befriending such musical luminaries as Busoni, Kreisler, Caruso, Paderewski and Bruno Walter, and promoting his work so effectively that the renowned conductor Arthur Nikisch included his transcription of Monteverdi’s *Lamento d’Arianna* on a Philharmonic concert. Deeply impressed by a performance of Richard Strauss’ three-year old *Salome* that he attended in Berlin, Respighi went home to Bologna in 1909 and wrote his own operatic “tragic poem in three acts,” *Semirâma*, set in ancient Babylon; it was premiered in Bologna in 1910. Performances of the *Notturmo* and excerpts from *Semirâma* in Rome in 1912 (and frustration at being unable to land a regular teaching appointment at Bologna’s Liceo Musicale) led him to accept a post on the faculty of Rome’s Santa Cecilia Academy in 1913. He found his first great success, and his musical voice, with the opulent tone poem *The Fountains of Rome* and the first set of *Ancient Airs and Dances* in 1917. He was appointed director of the Conservatory of the Santa Cecilia Academy in 1923, but found the administrative duties too intrusive on his creative work and resigned from the position three years later, though he did continue teaching privately for several years. Respighi began touring internationally with a visit to Prague in 1921 and he thereafter traveled extensively throughout Europe and North and South America to conduct and occasionally appear as piano soloist in his works; he made four trips to the United States between 1925 and 1932. His burgeoning career began to take a toll on his health, however, and a heart murmur was diagnosed in 1931. Like Gustav Mahler after a similar diagnosis of heart disease, Respighi nevertheless carried on with his demanding schedule and by 1935 he had pretty well worn himself out. He died of a heart attack in Rome on April 18, 1936; he was 56.

Roman Festivals of 1928 was the third of Respighi's trilogy of symphonic poems inspired by the city of Rome, preceded by *The Fountains of Rome* in 1916 and *The Pines of Rome* in 1923. During the dozen years when he composed this triptych, Respighi had become one of the leading musical figures of the time and, after he left his teaching post at the Saint Cecilia Academy in Rome in 1925, devoted himself to composing and touring. It was on the second of his four visits to the United States that the premiere of the *Roman Festivals* took place. It came near the end of a coast-to-coast tour, during which Respighi was repeatedly enervated by the pace of American life and harassed by squads of inquisitive reporters and bothersome *paparazzi*. In her charming biography of her husband, Elsa Respighi recounted one worrisome incident that occurred in Chicago. "Respighi was resting on the bed just before his concert when someone knocked at the door," she wrote. "I went to open it and found myself face to face with a classical criminal type (straight out of an American film) who asked to see Respighi. Meanwhile I heard Ottorino, without moving, warmly welcome the unexpected visitor: 'Oh, Mario, how are you? What a marvelous surprise!' Ottorino went on talking to him, told him he had seen his mother just before she died and met his sister in Bologna, reminisced about this and that. Grim when he entered the room, the man's expression gradually became gentler, sadder and when he finally decided to speak, his voice shook with emotion. 'I came to ask you for a ticket for the concert tonight,' he said. 'Of course, I'll leave one with the porter,' replied Ottorino, and with that, the man, apologizing for being in a hurry, almost ran out into the corridor. I had scarcely closed the door when two more knocks made me run to open it again. It was the police who wanted to know if we had seen a man who had climbed the fire-escape, got into the corridor by breaking a window and later been observed leaving our room. 'We've had a narrow escape, it seems to me,' Ottorino said to me afterwards, and he told me that Mario had been one of his playmates as a boy. When he grew up he went to America and joined a gang of mobsters. In recent years he had been sent to jail several times and his mother had been heart-broken. Respighi's cordial welcome obviously disarmed the poor devil and the memory of his mother touched him." Signor and Signora Respighi were probably glad to move on to the next town.

Respighi said that this work was a vivid musical depiction of "visions and evocations of Roman fêtes." Its four scenes span the history of the Eternal City, from the chilling struggle of the early Christians in the coliseums of ancient times (*Circus Maximus*), through a Medieval pilgrimage (*The Jubilee*, built around the old German hymn *Christ ist erstanden — Christ Is Risen*) and the Renaissance merriment of a wine festival and moonlit serenade (*The October Festival*), to the revelry of modern-day Rome (*Epiphany*). As with Respighi's other Roman tone poems, this one juxtaposes music of intimacy and sensitivity with episodes of overwhelming sonority to make a work as rich in orchestral color as the subjects it portrays.

Respighi prefaced the orchestral score of his *Roman Festivals* with the following description of the music:

"I. CIRCUS MAXIMUS — A threatening sky hangs over the Circus Maximus, but it is the people's holiday: 'Ave Nero!' The iron doors are unlocked, the strains of a religious song and the howling of wild beasts mingle in the air. The crowd comes to its feet in frenzy. Unperturbed, the song of the martyrs gathers strength, conquers and then is drowned in the tumult.

"II. THE JUBILEE — Pilgrims trail down the long road, praying. Finally, from the summit of Monte Mario appears to ardent eyes and gasping spirits the holy city: 'Rome! Rome!' A hymn of praise bursts forth, the churches ring out their reply.

"III. THE OCTOBER FESTIVAL — The October [Wine Harvest] Festival in the Roman 'Castelli' covered with vines; echoes of the hunt, tinkling bells, songs of love. Then in the tender twilight arises a romantic serenade [for mandolin].

"IV. EPIPHANY — The night before Epiphany in the Piazza Navona; a characteristic rhythm of trumpets dominates the frantic clamor; above the swelling noise float, from time to time, rustic motives, saltarello cadenzas, the strains of a barrel-organ in a booth and the call of a barker, the harsh song and the lively *stornello* in which is expressed the popular sentiment — *Lassàtete passà, semo Romani!* ('We are Romans, let us pass!')

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